

1	2	3
11	South Central	20
12	South East Central	4
13	South Eastern	20
14	South Western	6
15	Western	16
16	West Central	10
17	Konkan	0
TOTAL		172

Gauge conversion in Tamil Nadu

1926. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether while taking up and executing broad gauge conversion work between Chennai and Rameswaram, it is considered to be dam slow in as much as the scheme was approved as early as in 1997-98;

(b) whether the conversion process between Mandapam and Manamadurai would be completed by the end of March, 2007;

(c) whether it is also a fact that other reach between Trichy and Manamadurai has been moving like a snail and whether it would be speeded up with sufficient allocation of funds; and

(d) whether there can be a specific time-frame commitment for completion of this reach by which only the benefit of entire conversion can be had?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) On the suggested alignment, broad gauge line already exists on Chennai-Madurai and Madurai-Rameswaram gauge conversion project was sanctioned in the year 1997-98. On this project, gauge conversion of Madurai-Mandapam has already been completed and commissioned on 30.4.2005. The work of conversion of the section from Mandapam to Rameshwaram alongwith the Pamban Bridge is targeted for

completion by 31.03.2007. The work is being monitored closely for timely completion.

(c) and (d) On Tiruchchirappalli-Manamadurai gauge conversion project, work on Tiruchchirappalli-Pudukottai section has been completed and Pudukottai-Karaikudi section is targeted for completion during 2006-07. Work on the balance project i.e. Karaikudi-Manamadurai section is likely to be completed during 2007-08.

Modernisation and expansion of Chennai Central and Egmore stations

1927. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has announced that Central station and Egmore station in Chennai would be modernized and expanded followed by a few major railway stations in Tamil Nadu during his recent visit to Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof and follow up action taken in terms of investigation, preparation of project and stage of financial allocation thereof; and

(c) whether it is possible to give a probable time frame for completion of this work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) With a view to provide upgraded passenger amenities, Chennai Central and Chennai Egmore stations have been taken up for development as model stations. The following works have been sanctioned and are in progress at these stations:-

- (i) Chennai Central—Works totaling Rs. 4.07 crore which are already in progress and targeted for completion by December, 2007.
- (ii) Chennai Egmore— Works costing Rs. 6 crore which are targeted for completion by October, 2007 for which plans and estimates are under preparation.

Chennai Central station is also proposed to be developed into a world class station for which it is proposed to engage qualified consultants. However, no target is laid down for this purpose.